Training the Afghan National Army

A Monograph
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Abstract

TRAINING THE AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY by LTC Troy D. Lewis, 56 pages.

This monograph examines the changes in the US training of the Afghan National Army (ANA) from 2001 to present. It looks at historical examples of Security Force Assistance from the late 1700s through the 1990s to establish four training concepts to be followed as the ANA becomes a modern and fully developed armed force. The four historical training concepts are the development of small-units, training on small-unit tactics, development of officer training, and training for non-commissioned officers. As technology progressed, two additional concepts were added; literacy and technical training.

The ANA training timeline began with US Special Forces conducting the initial training of Afghan soldiers within three months of the September 11 attacks. This was followed by training led by the international community under the Office of Security Cooperation – Afghanistan, and subsequently, Task Force Phoenix. The most recent iterations of ANA training have seen US Special Forces again training the ANA, but transitioning this task to the General Purpose Forces of the US Army with oversight provided by the NATO Training Mission– Afghanistan due to the finite number of Special Forces soldiers available to train the increasing number of Afghan soldiers that require training.

Coalition Forces have recognized that conventional military action alone is not sufficient to ensure the enduring success of the ANA. Success in contemporary military operations will be determined in large part by how well and how quickly the ANA can assume the responsibility for security from the coalition. The goal must be that the ANA is an accountable, self-sustaining, capable and credible force able to meet the security challenges faced by Afghanistan and looked upon as legitimate by the population. Achieving this may take years, but all activities should seek to achieve this aim. Ultimately, this legitimizes Afghan authority and enables the exit of coalition forces.

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Introduction

This monograph assesses the changes in training methods employed by the United States military in the training of Afghanistan's National Security Forces (ANSF) during the period from 2001-2010. US Army doctrine places emphasis on the operational art of training host nation forces, in order to promote strong, stable states. Consequently, evaluation of training and progress is critical to determining whether this objective is being met. If the ANSF does not develop into the force the Afghan nation requires to provide both internal and external security, the ANSF risks becoming an irrelevant institution in Afghan society. Another risk for Afghanistan if the ANSF fails is potential domination by foreign powers or reversion back to Taliban control. Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, paragraph 6-10, points to the need for widespread, quality host nation forces: "security forces that abuse civilians do not win the populace's trust and confidence."[1] Coalition Forces have recognized that conventional military action alone is not sufficient for enduring success. Success in contemporary military operations is determined in large part by how well and how quickly host nation security forces, in this case the ANSF, can assume the responsibility for security from the coalition. Host nation forces inherently do a better job within their own country than foreign armies do taking on counterinsurgency. If the training provided fails to produce a competent ANA force, there is a high risk of overall strategic failure in Afghanistan.

Background in this evaluation begins with historical and contextual inquiries. This begins by looking at historical examples of Security Force Assistance from the late 1700s through the 1990s. This review led to the prominence of four core training concepts; the development of

[1]U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Army, Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 6-2.

small-units, training on small-unit tactics, development of officer training, and training for non-commissioned officers. This monograph will look at how these concepts came about and whether they have been utilized in the development of the ANA.

Additional questions that focus on the last ten years include determining who was in charge of the institutional training program prior to the establishment of the NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A)? Further, what role has the United States Special Operations Forces (US SOF) played in training both Afghan general purpose and special operation forces?

These questions help provide a holistic means to understanding how training program changes produce better-trained ANSF. Understanding who was in charge of the institutional training, prior to the establishment of the NTM-A, is important because it relates to the ability to effectively provide resources and conduct training. Articulating the role of US SOF is important, because the available number of these specially trained soldiers is finite and diverting their attention to conduct training may hinder the ability of US SOF, as a whole, to respond to emerging threats worldwide. Identifying what specific Afghan attributes improves training by understanding the culture from which the recruits come and identifying the best training methods to which the recruits will best respond. Finally, reviewing how resources are allocated between the ANA and the ANP will focus on the span of control that the NTM-A has, and helps determine whether any imbalances place either the ANA or the ANP at a disadvantage to the other.

The research for this monograph was conducted primarily through telephone or email interviews. These interviews were conducted with current and former personnel at the NTM-A, former International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Joint Command (IJC) operations and plans personnel, current US SOF officers that have command time with troops throughout Afghanistan, and the leadership of the first unit to lead the training effort as part of the NTM-A. Additional literature reviewed the training methods utilized in the actual training of Security Force Assistance (SFA), the Fort Leavenworth Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance (JCISFA), and Special Forces literature on methodologies for training foreign armies.

Newspapers and think tank products will also be utilized to gather information. Current US Army field manuals regarding operations, counterinsurgency (COIN), SFA and stability operations will be used to identify links between these training concepts and the current training program being utilized in Afghanistan.

Definitions

Training the ANA is an integral part of the broader program called Security Force Assistance. SFA is defined as "unified action by the joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational community to generate, employ, sustain, and assist host nation or regional security forces in support of legitimate authority."[2] The US may conduct SFA with a host nation (HN) in response to an existing or potential internal or external threat. The circumstances are not mutually exclusive and can occur simultaneously. Different threats may require the US to provide varying levels and types of US support and capabilities to the HN.[3] Under the auspices of SFA, the United States has taken on the training of the ANA.

Tactics is defined in Field Manual 3-90, *Tactics* as "the employment of units in combat. It includes the ordered arrangement and maneuver of units in relation to each other, to the terrain, and to the enemy to translate potential combat power into victorious battles and engagements."[4] In this monograph, this term will be used in reference to the training of soldiers in the techniques of movement and maneuver to be utilized on the field of battle.

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[2]Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance Office, *Security Force Assistance Planners Guide*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Center, 14 February 2008), 2-3.

[3]Ibid.

[4]U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Army Field Manual 3-90, *Tactics* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2001), G-26.

Small-unit refers to the size of the unit being trained. The examples that will be presented show that training effectiveness seems to peak at the battalion level. First, training a force greater than battalion level seems to diminish the overall effectiveness as it becomes cumbersome to maintain focus over a formation that large. The span of control at the battalion level is normally three companies, which is easier to direct and control than a larger formation where the span of control increases to potentially nine or more companies at the regimental level. The secondary reason supporting the focus on battalion and below formations is if the training is not conducted at these smaller levels, it is extremely difficult to integrate them into much larger formations.

Specific training of officers and NCOs helps these individuals prepare for their increased responsibilities. In some early examples within the Unites States, officers and NCOs officers were elected by the soldiers to their positions based on perceived knowledge or popularity, not necessarily because of military adroitness. In contrast, European officers are more prone to study tactics at elite military academies prior to being placed in the force, while the NCOs are studied under the eyes of the senior sergeants in their unit. The concept that makes the most sense and reinforces this type of training is the train-the-trainer system. Officers or NCOs would be selected to train directly under the tutelage of an older officer or NCO. Once the selected officer or NCO had made significant progress and showed their understanding of the multiple TTPs being trained, they would be put in front of their troops, better prepared to lead them in battle.

Literacy is a relatively new area to receive attention when training a military. Two hundred years ago, the military did not require a high degree of literacy to create or maintain an effective force. Troops trained primarily on tactics and marksmanship, neither of which required the soldier to be literate. At that time it would be considered sufficient if the officer in charge and a few of his NCOs were literate so they would be able to take care of the unit. However, as technology has advanced, it has become more important to have a literate force. Standard operating procedures, maintenance manuals, equipment accountability, and technical fields

demand that all soldiers have a basic level of literacy in order to help facilitate an understanding of tactics, supply and maintenance, and the ability to read and comprehend something as simple as a pay statement.

Technical training looks at the need for more specialized training in fields such as communications, intelligence, field artillery, and logistics. Training in these areas is required due to the increased nature of complexity seen in these fields, particularly as they are becoming more critical as technology improves their effectiveness. It takes much longer for a soldier that has not received any specific training in these areas to become familiar with how things work, to truly understand the capabilities and limitations present, and be able to comprehend the best methods for applying those systems than it would for a soldier provided with thorough and detailed training.

Historical Examples of Security Force Assistance

The United States is not the only country asked to provide security force assistance. To assist today's soldiers in executing SFA-type missions, a look back into the history of training and advising is recommended. Doing this will help soldiers understand what issues soldiers in the past faced and suggest potential ways of solving similar problems faced in current training missions. This will also assist soldiers in training the ANA to become the force envisioned in 2001. Security force assistance operations have been conducted for hundreds of years. According to Donald Stoker in his book *Military Advising and Assistance: From Mercenaries to Privatization, 1815-2007,* military advising generally falls into six categories: as a tool of

modernization, as a tool of nation building, for economic purposes or penetration, as an ideological tool, as a counterinsurgency tool, and for fun and profit.[5]

Foreign advisors from across Europe spent years assisting the Chilean army and navy in developing various tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) that resulted in a more proficient armed force. As the Chilean armed forces continued to grow in proficiency and confidence, the Chilean government began to create military and naval missions of its own, using the military and naval skills acquired from Europe and, to a lesser extent, the United States, to shape the armed forces of its neighbors.[6] The proliferation of these European and American training TTPs not only helped further the status of the countries involved; it also brought an increased measure of legitimacy to the Chilean armed forces.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, world powers began providing military assistance to their colonial holdings. This was done not only as a means to preserve the territorial integrity of those holdings, but as a way to ensure that the overseeing power would not need to provide as large a force to maintain control of the country. Advisors given this kind of duty walked the line between trying to please their own army with regard to developing the forces advised and trying to fully satisfy the demands of the host nation leaders and forces.[7]

One well-known British advisor was T. E. Lawrence. Lawrence's unique perspective on Arab culture made him a perfect candidate for British Intelligence. Upon selection, he immediately went to Cairo with a military commission, to assist the Arabs in their ongoing war

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[5]Donald Stoker, *Military Advising and Assistance: From Mercenaries to Privatization, 1815-2007,* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 1.

[6]William F. Sater, "The Impact of Foreign Advisors on Chile's Armed Forces, 1810-2005," *Military Advising and Assistance: From Mercenaries to Privatization, 1815-2007,* ed. Donald Stoker (New York: Routledge, 2008), 39.

[7]Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance Office, *JCISFA Commander's Handbook for Security Force Assistance* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Center, 14 July 2008), 40.

with the Ottoman Empire. Up to that point, Britain had been providing both money and material resources, but the ongoing struggle was going badly for the Arabs. In order to help stabilize the situation, Lawrence, with his unique skill set, was tasked to provide advice and guidance to the Arabs in their struggle against the Turks. Although he was not the only officer involved in the Arab uprising, it was Lawrence's strategic imagination and his determination to make the British high command in Cairo not only accept his vision but finance and support what most of this command thought was unlikely or impossible.[8] Lawrence focused his efforts on the Emir Faisal Hussein, one of the sons of Sherif Hussein bin Ali, the leader of the Mecca territory. Lawrence quickly ascertained that the Arabs could not prevail against the Turks if they continued to engage the Turks in frontal-type assaults. As he gained the trust of Faisal, he was able to convince him that he should align with the British. Further, he suggested that a more indirect type of fight would better benefit the Arabs, bleeding the Turks while preserving the Arab fighting force. To accomplish this, Lawrence spent numerous hours with Faisal and other leaders within his inner circle, teaching them how to plan and execute the hit-and-run guerrilla tactics designed to accomplish the desired end state of Arab freedom from Turkish rule.

Lawrence was known to be very shrewd and perceptive, evidenced by the means by which he led and instructed Faisal and his troops during the Arab revolt. In the context Lawrence found himself, he noted that formal visits to give advice were not as good as the constant dropping of ideas or lessons in the discourse of casual talk.[9] Lawrence felt that as an advisor, he should be a constant companion of Faisal and that through casual conversation, ideas and lessons

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[8]Michael Korda, *Hero: The Life and Legend of Lawrence of Arabia*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2010), 41.

[9]Robert D. Ramsey, *Advice for Advisors: Suggestions and Observations from Lawrence to the Present*, Global War on Terrorism Paper 19, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 4.

would naturally come out. Lawrence found this technique preferable to just meeting in order to discuss an idea or plan and leaving again. By helping the Arabs understand the concepts and providing a level of mentorship, Lawrence helped them learn how to conduct operations for themselves. This allowed Faisal to claim that the Arabs actually won the war, not that they just followed the advisor's plan to a successful conclusion.

The key features of this manner of advising include an understanding of the nature of the peoples and politics of the areas of engagement, ability to work with them (as opposed to ignoring or alienating them), and to understand that a military solution stands or falls as the people affected decide to support or oppose it. In this example, British historical experience, the availability of old colonial and third world hands, the ability to work effectively with allies, the economical use of manpower, the availability of a broad range of civil expertise to support the armed forces, and flexible and original operating techniques helped in this type of fight.[10] The importance of Lawrence's work with the Arabs showed his attempts at developing small-units, small-unit tactics, and his one-on-one discourse with a few of the most important Arabs he worked with during this time.

This type of advisory effort continued during World War II when the British sent a team into Burma to assist in defending Burma against the Japanese. In March 1942, shortly after the fall of Rangoon, Viscount William Slim was given command of BurCorps, consisting of the 17th Indian and the 1st Burmese Divisions. Soon after Slim arrived in theater and joined his unit in Burma, they were heavily engaged by the Japanese, eventually forcing a BurCorps withdrawal back to India. After resettling in India, Slim assessed the mental and physical make-up of his men and developed a plan to train all of the soldiers within his command to take on the Japanese.

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[10]John Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons From Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (London: Praeger, 2002), 41.

One of the first things he needed to do was change the mindset of his soldiers so they saw themselves as equal to the Japanese forces they engaged in the jungles of Burma. "We had to make the individuals who composed the HQs, staff officers, signalers, cooks, clerks, mess waiters, and menials, themselves mobile."[11] This meant making everyone get out into the jungle to become more familiar and comfortable moving around in it. He pushed his command posts out away from their static bases to help further simulate the need for mobility when fighting the Japanese in the countryside. These acts increased the confidence of his soldiers and they began to believe they could effectively fight the Japanese in a jungle environment. In 1945, Slim launched an offensive campaign into Burma, with lines of supply stretching almost to the breaking point across hundreds of miles of trackless jungle, resulting in the recapture of Rangoon by a combined land/air/sea operation in May 1945.[12] Slim's work in the development of small-unit tactics in the jungles of Burma and the officers and NCOs proved successful in occupying the Japanese while maintaining an open throughway to China during the latter half of World War II.

A Brief History of Security Force Assistance by the United States

Providing SFA has become such a prevalent part of US engagements over the last twenty-five years the latest Department of Defense Quadrennial Defense Review, makes the ability to "train, equip, and advise indigenous forces, deploy and engage with partner nations; conduct irregular warfare; and support security, stability, transition, and reconstruction operations, a core mission of the military."[13] Since the end of World War II, American military

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[11]Field Marshal Viscount William J. Slim, *Defeat into Victory (*London: PAPERMAC, Macmillan Publishers Limited, 1956), 138.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Robert D. Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, Global War on Terrorism Series Occasional Paper 18, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 1.

officers and soldiers have gone overseas in large numbers to provide advice and training to military personnel in developing countries.[14]

Nations assisting other countries in the professionalization, training, and conduct of military exercises to increase the effectiveness of a host nation's army is a concept that has been around for many years. One of the earliest examples comes from the United States Army's experience with foreign advisors who came to America during the Revolutionary War to serve in the Continental Army. Individual advisors assisted in many different facets of the war; from providing tactical advice to General Washington and his local commanders to formalizing military training for the militias and the American citizen-soldier. None of these advisors contributed as much to the American cause as Baron Frederick von Steuben.[15] Von Steuben was a Prussian soldier who spent his early years in the army of Frederick the Great, where his daily activities included "leading his company in hours of drill, keeping a watchful eye on the discipline and the cleanliness of his men."[16] Arriving at the end of 1777, Steuben saw that the Americans "fought like demons and had a tenacity and spirit that even their opponents acknowledged. But they lacked the ability to maneuver and change formations quickly, and the restraint that would allow them to deliver devastating volleys of musketry at close range against an advancing enemy. The Continentals wanted, in short, the training that would permit them to fight the British in the conventional European fashion."[17] As this was the type of training and maneuver Steuben grew up understanding and executing, he was tasked to direct the training of maneuver and drill for the American troops at Valley Forge in early March 1778. At the end of

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[14]Robert D. Ramsey, Global War on Terrorism Series Occasional Paper 19, 17.

[15]Ibid., 93.

[16]Paul Locklear, *The Drillmaster of Valley Forge* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2008), 11.

[17]Ibid., 57.

six weeks, the progress attained seemed almost miraculous to Washington and his officers and men.[18]

The method von Steuben used is seen today as the "train the trainer" concept. He trained a single company of handpicked veterans, who learned the basics of drill and maneuver directly under Steuben's tutelage. Once he felt satisfied with their progress, he returned them to their original units where they functioned as drill instructors.[19] Von Steuben was so adept at training the troops that winter that Washington named him to the post of Inspector General, charged with overseeing soldier training across the entire Continental Army. Over the following years, von Steuben prepared his *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*, which was published in 1779 and became the army's standard drill manual.[20] The training that Steuben provided underscored the need for small-unit tactics as a means of increasing the effectiveness and the discipline of the army. Yet even today, drill exercises remain an important component of basic military training – and in part for the same reasons that made it so fundamental in eighteenth-century warfare. Drill instills discipline. Constant practice of repetitive motions and movements turn men into unthinking cogs in a larger military machine. It breaks down individuality, replacing the inclination to think with the instinct to obey.[21]

As the US spiraled into the American Civil War, foreign advisors were again sprinkled across the battlefield, both North and South. Both France and Britain sent individual advisors to the United States, providing advice on formations and tactics taken from recent battles across

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[18]John M. Palmer, *General Von Steuben* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1937), 160.

[19]Paul Locklear, *The Drillmaster of Valley Forge* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2008), 97.

[20]Joseph R. Riling, *Baron Von Steuben and His Regulations* (Philadelphia, PA: Ray Riling Arms Books Co., 1966), 27.

[21]Locklear, 90.

Europe, but none had near the impact that von Steuben had during the American Revolution. The main task for these advisors was to assess whether or not their country should formally enter the conflict on one side or the other, or if they should just provide resource assistance when possible. It was during this time that soldiers from both sides took it upon themselves to take the hard lessons learned from early battles and apply them to the training of new soldiers and units prior to being assigned as part of the fielded force.

State militias trained during the Civil War were benefactors of Regular Army commissioned and non-commissioned officers' training prior to service in combat.[22] Experienced NCOs were essential to the Union's war effort as they provided the discipline necessary to lead large groups of inexperienced conscripts and volunteer militiamen into high casualty situations.[23] This training helped ensure that the new troops understood what was expected of them during combat, provided time for unit establishment and formation, and accommodated individual and small-unit training before the unit was sent into battle.

Officers also made their contributions in the training arena. Similar to von Steuben in the American revolutionary War, CPT William A. Tarbutton's job was not to teach all the soldiers in camp how to march, his task was to teach the officers - commissioned and non-commissioned - so they in turn could teach their men.[24] "The drills were regular and complete," remembered Chaplain William H. Locke of the 11th regiment, "discipline was the happy medium between the liberty of the citizen and the strict military rule of active service, preparing each man to gradually

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[22]Atlas Editions, Civil War Cards, "Soldiers' Life," available at http://www.wtv-zone.com/civilwar/ soldier html (accessed December 15, 2010).

[23]Nicole Smith, "The History of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps: 1765-1865," available at http://www.articlemyriad.com/26 html (accessed February 24, 2011).

[24]William J. Miller, *The Training of an Army: Camp Curtin and the North's Civil War* (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Publishing Company, Inc., 1990), 72.

forget the one and submit to the other."[25] Additional training was provided on camp sanitation, techniques for foraging, basic first aid, and how to properly cook the rations issued to ensure soldiers were not getting sick.[26] This type of training helped to preserve more of the overall fighting force as the war continued through improved sanitation methods, first aid techniques, and that the constant drill provided a better trained force, prepared to fight on the battlefield. These techniques ensured that more trained soldiers were available to fight in the battles yet to come.

In 1950, the United States went to war on the Korean Peninsula. South Korea, backed by the US, was fighting communist-backed North Korea for control of the entire country. In response to the initially poor showing of the South Korean troops on the battlefield, the US created the Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG) to improve the effectiveness of the Republic of Korea Army (ROKA). While KMAG advisors were advising the ROKA on creating, training, and equipping units, the Eighth US Army controlled overall combat operations. KMAG advisor detachments with ROKA combat units responded operationally to the Eighth US Army, but administratively to KMAG.[27] After seeing that Korean troops needed more intensive retraining than previously thought, it was directed that each US Army Corps would create a training camp for retraining ROKA divisions within the corps reserve area. The nine-week course progressed from individual weapons and tactics instruction to squad, platoon, company, and battalion. The tempo of combat operations prevented most divisions from completing the entire course. By late 1952 all of the original ten ROKA divisions had completed five weeks of refresher training, and some had returned several times to accumulate up to eleven weeks total

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[25]Ibid., 73.

[26]Atlas Editions, Civil War Cards, "Soldiers' Life," available at http://www.wtv-zone.com/civilwar/ soldier html (accessed December 15, 2010).

[27]Robert D. Ramsey, Global War on Terrorism Occasional Paper 18, 6.

training.[28] By focusing on small-unit tactics, officer and NCO training, ROKA units returned to the front with more skills, confidence, and spirit. They showed the benefits of the program through their increased combat proficiency, seen by losing fifty percent less men and equipment than units without the training.[29]

Vietnam challenged the US military with its longest, largest, and most complex advisory effort to that point in time. Begun in 1950 when the US provided logistical support to the French in Indochina, the Military Advisory Assistance Group (MAAG) became the MAAG-Vietnam (MAAG-V) in 1955.[30] The initial goal of the American advisory effort was to organize, train, and equip the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) and develop the combat effectiveness appropriate to maintain internal security and to defend against external attack.[31] Even with the recent advisory experiences of World War II and Korea to draw from, the TTPs, regarding overall small-unit training, were not adequately captured or passed down. While the focus was on the development of small-units, their associated tactics in both conventional and unconventional settings, training the officers and non-commissioned officers, and the technical training needed in the areas such as communications, intelligence, and field artillery, it was determined that the US would retain the lead in conducting operations in the field. The limited American effort to mold the South Vietnamese Armed Forces (SVAF) into a conventional army in its own image only served to make them "incongruent with the culture it was trying to defend" and dependent upon the US for continued support.[32] This decision created an environment of

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[28]Ibid., 9.

[29]Robert D. Ramsey, Global War on Terrorism Occasional Paper 18, 9.

[30]Ibid., 27.

[31]Ibid., 53

[32]John Fenzel, "Vietnam: We Could Have Won," *Small Wars Journal*, available at http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/fenzel htm (accessed March 10, 2011).

Vietnamese dependence on US forces to conceive, plan, and execute most missions, never allowing the South Vietnamese military to take the lead, learn from their successes or defeats, or build the confidence required to make the training become a part of the unit's make-up.

Despite these recurring issues, the advisory effort in Vietnam would prove to be successful, at least on the surface. After almost twenty years, the RVNAF was a battle-tested, well-equipped force of 550,000 regulars and 525,000 territorials, and had an air force with the largest helicopter force in Asia. Yet the RVNAF still had chronic problems - weak leadership, corruption, unwillingness to reform, weak support from the people, and lack of confidence. So when the North Vietnamese attacked again in 1975, and US forces were not there, the RVNAF proved inadequate for the task.[33] It is ironic that while the US did come to the immediate rescue of the SVAF, by its subsequent actions, the US was inadvertently condemning the SVAF to a long-term catastrophic defeat.[34]

To determine why the South was unable to take on and defeat the North, we must look at the training of North Vietnamese forces. MAJ Andrew L. Cooley, a recent advisor in Vietnam, saw the Viet Cong model of training its forces as very effective. He stated "Viet Cong training is designed to produce an efficient, well-disciplined soldier capable of functioning in a guerrilla war. The effectiveness of this training depends on the availability of base areas and strong command emphasis. It is well planned and supervised. It is effective because it is functional and adaptable to local conditions. Training emphasizes the use of lesson plans, rehearsals and demonstrations in order to take maximum advantage of the training time available. It stresses

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[33]Robert D. Ramsey, Global War on Terrorism Occasional Paper 18, 32.

[34]John Fenzel, "Vietnam: We Could Have Won," *Small Wars Journal,* available at http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/fenzel htm (accessed March 10, 2011).

practical application and student participation."[35] This coincides with what has been seen in the previous historical examples; development of a small-unit, refinement of their tactics, and the training of officers and NCOs. In this example, the US and South Vietnam were on the wrong side of the training effort.

In the Western Hemisphere, South America is seen as a traditional example of the US Army's role in advising and training. Special Forces teams went into El Salvador in the early 1990s after a coup had overthrown the Salvadoran government, leaving the El Salvadoran Armed Forces (ESAF) in charge. The ESAF was an 11,000 man force officered by a tight-knit group of graduates of the El Salvadoran Military Academy and manned by peasant soldiers. A typical Latin American military at that time, it was poorly trained, inadequately equipped, and spread throughout the country performing security and garrison duties.[36] In an attempt to improve the capability of the ESAF to fight the internal insurgents, a US SF Mobile Training Team (MTT) from Panama was deployed to train a 600-man Immediate Reaction Battalion.[37] While the training was considered an overall success and the soon-to-be 17,000-man army considered one of the most professional in the region, there were some challenges along the way. Although the trainers found that the concept of an NCO Corps was alien within the Salvadoran military tradition, as it is throughout much of Latin America, the SF MTT continued to push the program that made perfect sense to them as Americans. Ignoring the ESAF structure of commissioned officers and short-term peasant conscripts, a NCO rank structure was superimposed on the ESAF,

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[35]Andrew L. Cooley, "The Viet Cong Soldier: His Strengths, Weaknesses and Vulnerabilities" (MMAS Monograph, US Army Command and General Staff School, 1966), 180.

[36]Robert D. Ramsey, Global War on Terrorism Occasional Paper 18, 83.

[37]Ibid., 84.

something it did not understand or accept.[38] While advisors also focused on the refinement of small-units, their tactics, and officer training, the focus on non-commissioned officer training was misplaced and not within the sphere of influence the SF advisors held. The lesson here is that any advisory effort needs to fit within the existing construct of the indigenous force being trained, if not, the training will not be accepted or maintained and the effort will be wasted.

Recurring Concepts

The recurring concepts that standout in the above historical examples are:

1. The need to develop and train small-units.
2. The development and refinement of associated tactics.
3. The training of officers and NCOs.
4. The need for technical training.

The development of small-unit TTPs and the subsequent training of them has been a cornerstone of training since the late 1700s. It was also seen in the forming of companies during the Civil War, the Arab guerrilla bands suggested by Lawrence that fought the Turks during and after the World War I, and in Vietnam.

The development and refinement of tactics is important because in order to train at higher levels of command, the smallest units must be thoroughly trained at their tasks. For example, if a platoon does not understand what it is to do within a certain battle drill, it will have a disruptive effect on the company. Until that platoon is drilled to standard, the company will be less effective during combat operations. This is easily seen in the actions taken by Baron von Steuben and the training conducted with the Continental Army at Valley Forge. The development and

[38]Ibid., 99.

refinement of tactics is also seen during the Civil War and the other historical examples presented earlier.

The difference between what officers and NCOs do for a unit is that the officers plan and develop what the unit will do and the NCO directs the execution of that plan. Plans will not be successfully executed if NCOs do not ensure the soldiers in their charge are well-trained, competent, and ready to face any challenge. This requires different training to be conducted for each. This concept makes the most sense and reinforces the training is the train-the-trainer system. This is where a certain number of officers or non-commissioned officer would be selected to train directly under the tutelage of an older officer or NCO. Once the selected officer or NCO had made significant progress and showed their understanding of the multiple TTPs being trained, they would be put in front of their troops, better prepared to lead them in battle. Ensuring that the soldiers under them are trained on how to do the senior's tasks, continuity is provided within that unit so when the senior officer or NCO is transferred to another job, retires, or is killed in battle, a similarly trained officer or NCO is prepared to step in and assume the conduct of the required duties.

To be successful in the new millennium, the army needs skilled, versatile, and highly motivated NCOs capable of accomplishing their mission in changed environments; NCOs confident in their ability to train soldiers in individual small-unit tasks relevant to their units' mission and who use creative approaches to maximize their subordinates' full potential; and lastly, NCOs who can ably lead their soldiers in battle.[39]

Technical training was not at the same level as basic infantry training in many of the historical examples presented. This was because there was no overarching need for

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[39]Robert S. Rush, *NCO Guide*, 7th Ed, (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2003), 2.

communication, intelligence, or field artillery training at that time as those combat multipliers were not well developed. As technology advanced, it became more important to train soldiers on the proper use of the latest technology so its advantages could be exploited. To train selected soldiers, they were removed from their units and placed in a training environment that allowed for a type of immersion training; constant work with the equipment until execution became almost second nature.

Training small-units, developing their tactics, training officers and NCOs, and providing technical training are seen as historically important in the evolution of an army. They continue to have importance today as US soldiers are tasked with the training of the ANA.

History of the Afghan National Army

An organized Afghan army has existed since the 1880s when the country was ruled by Emir Abdur Rahman Khan. From the mid-1880s through the mid-1890s, Rahman's conscript army, financed and largely armed by the British, successfully dealt with three rebellions in the various ethnic regions under his rule.[40] The Afghan army was modernized by King Amanullah Khan in the early 1900s just before the Third Anglo-Afghan War. King Amanullah and his Afghan army fought against the British in 1919, and by 3 June of that year, a ceasefire was agreed to, after which Afghanistan declared full independence from the United Kingdom over its foreign affairs.[41] In 1933, the Afghan army was again modernized during King Zahir Shah's reign.

From the 1960s to the early 1990s, the Afghan army was trained and equipped mostly by the former Soviet Union. During the Soviet occupation in the 1980s, the National Army of

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[40]Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2007), 93.

[41]Ibid., 103.

Afghanistan was involved in fighting against Mujahideen rebel groups. By 1992 after the withdrawal of Soviet forces and the fall of the communist regime in Kabul, the Soviet-trained army splintered between the government in Kabul and the various warring factions. During that time local militia forces were formed partly from the former Soviet era national army units which provided security for their own people living in the territories they controlled and the semblance of an organized army ceased to exist. This era was followed by the Taliban regime, which removed the remaining organized militia forces and controlled the country by Sharia Law."[42]

Actions Post-September 11, 2001

After the events of September 11, 2001, the United States determined that Osama bin Laden was responsible and that he was hiding somewhere in the Hindu Kush Mountains. The US demanded that the Taliban turn bin Laden over immediately and when that did not happen; steps were taken to initiate the military-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). US Special Forces (US SF) went to Afghanistan to coordinate military operations with the Northern Alliance against the Taliban. The goal for US SF soldiers was to convince the various warlords and tribal factions within the alliance to work together to defeat the Taliban.[43] US and coalition forces, along with the Northern Alliance, defeated Taliban forces in early 2002, training the ANA commenced. The Bonn II Conference, on rebuilding Afghanistan in December 2001, mandated a 70,000 strong Afghan National Army.[44] In February 2002, shortly after their arrival in the theater of operations,

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[42]Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance Office, *Afghan National Police Mentor Guide* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Center, May 2009), 5.

[43]Donald P. Wright, *A Different Kind of War: The United States Army in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM October 2001 – September 2005* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Studies Institute Press, US Army Combined Arms Center, 2010), 45.

[44]Andrew Feickert, "U.S. Military Operations in the Global War on Terrorism: Afghanistan, Africa, the Philippines, and Columbia," Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL32758, 9.

a portion of the British-led ISAF troops under Major General John McColl began training the first battalion of what would be called the Afghan National Guard (1st BANG).[45] Little doubt existed about the high levels of expertise and technology, warfighting doctrine, or training among the British soldiers or their ability to train the Afghans.[46] Due to the UK forces' limited capacity at the time, the recruiting and training of subsequent new ANA battalions was assumed by US Army Special Forces units.

US SOF units have a long history of training host nation forces, going back to the days of Vietnam. The success of US SOF training programs and the resulting professionalization of host nation forces made US SOF the premier trainers to our allies. While excellent trainers, SF soldiers normally remain in the US SOF community for the majority of their careers, seldom, if ever, moving back to the ranks of the general purpose forces (GPF). This keeps the knowledge, skills, and experience sheltered within the US SOF organization with no opportunity for cross-fertilization throughout the GPF.[47]

This supposition seems to be borne out by CPT Erhen Bedestani's own experience in the Wardak Province of Afghanistan in 2008. CPT Bedestani states that while his "detachment did not have an assigned partner Afghan force and the conventional American Forces advising the Afghan Army that were colocated on the Forward Operating Base (FOB) were operating with only two Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs). These two NCOs were part of a larger twelve-man Military Transition Team (MTT) assigned to train both the staff and tactical operations of the ANA Kandak (similar to a US Company). The other ten-member of the MTT were operating

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[45]Wright, 200.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Michael R. Binetti, "Institutionalizing Security Force Assistance" (MMAS Monograph, US Army School for Advanced Military Studies, 2008), 45.

in Logar Province with the rest of the ANA Battalion. My team and I noticed that the American MTT seemed overwhelmed with their task of training the Afghans and we asked if we could assist and were told we could. It appeared that the US MTT was not resourced with the equipment or personnel to properly mentor the Afghans. The detachment developed an improved training program that focused on basic rifle marksmanship and platoon patrolling techniques in an effort to enforce the fundamental skills required to conduct combat operations in the province. The GPFs were assigned the mission of maintaining security of the Main Supply Routes running though the province as well as operating a number of Combat Outposts (COPs) throughout the province. This limited the number of personnel devoted to training and advising Afghan General Purpose Forces."[48]

The key to the Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan (OMC-A) plan was securing the US Army's 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (SFG) as the unit responsible for training the ANA and border guard battalions.[49] The 3rd SFG was needed for this mission because the 5th SFG, with a designated focus in the CENTCOM region, was unable to conduct operations due to competing missions. The requirements for Iraq and Afghanistan have forced all Special Forces Groups to neglect their own primary area of operations and focus on Central Asia and the Middle East.[50]

In addition to the 3rd SFG, US Army units from the Florida National Guard's 53rd Infantry Brigade also deployed to train elements of the ANA.[51] By January 2003, over 1,700 soldiers in five Kandaks had completed a 10-week training course, and by June 2003 a total of

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[48]CPT Erhen Bedestani, phone interview by author, December 7, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

[49]Wright, 201.

[50]United States Marine Corps, *MAGTF Planner's Reference Guide* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Combat Development Command, October 15, 2010), 37.

[51]Feickert, 2.

4,000 troops had been trained.[52] In 2003, most of the training focus shifted from SF to the GPF. The difference between the two types of units is the Special Forces' advisor ability and capacity in "advanced skills and capabilities (such as language)" separating them from conventional counterparts who, "lack the capacity to conduct effective advisory operations"[53]

With the transition to the GPF, the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A), which falls under OEF, not ISAF, was placed in charge of training and providing US SF detachments to conduct partnered operations with Afghan commandos.[54] US SOF, under ISAF, was tasked to conduct military assistance, consisting of resourcing, mentorship, and actual advising in combat.[55]

In April 2003, Task Force (TF) Phoenix was established at the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC), outside of the capital of Kabul. The mission of TF Phoenix was to coordinate the individual and collective training of the ANA, along with the partnering of coalition members with ANA formations. This work was done in conjunction with the Office of Security Cooperation – Afghanistan (OSC-A), which was later renamed the Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A). As US SF teams and conventional Army units continued to train the ANA under TF Phoenix oversight, additional numbers of conventional troops were performing the training mission for the ANA. Providing security force assistance to indigenous forces is normally the sole domain of US SOF, but with the increased requirements of OSC-A/CSTC-A and TF Phoenix, US SOF began to see a reduced role in ANA training efforts.

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[52]Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance Office, *Afghan National Police Mentor Guide*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Center Printing, May 2009), 5.

[53]Binetti, 38.

[54]CPT Erhen Bedestani, phone interview by author, December 7, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

[55]Ibid.

Coalition Forces have recognized that conventional military action alone is not sufficient for enduring success. Success in contemporary military operations will be determined in large part by how well and how quickly HN Security Forces, in this case the ANSF, can assume the responsibility for security from the coalition. The goal must be that the ANSF is an accountable, self-sustaining, capable and credible force able to meet the security challenges faced by Afghanistan and looked upon as legitimate by the population. Achieving this may take years, but all activities should seek to achieve this aim from the outset. Ultimately, this legitimizes HN authority and enables the exit of coalition forces.[56]

NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A)

At the 2009 Strasbourg-Kehl Summit, NATO allies and partners announced that they would establish the NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A), drawing on NATO's successful experience training army units in Iraq, to oversee higher level training for the ANSF. NTM-A was established and merged with CSTC-A on November 21, 2009 to create a comprehensive training program for ANSF. On November 23, 2009, NATO obtained commitments from various allies for personnel and resources to help train, mentor and equip both the ANA and ANP.[57] The NTM-A is a unique organization within Afghanistan, seen-by the fact both the NTM-A Commander and Deputy are dual-slotted under both NTM-A and CSTC-A, meaning they work for NATO and the US simultaneously.[58] The main difference is that NTM-A is the NATO side of the command while CSTC-A is the US-only side of the command.[59]

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[56]American, British, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand (ABCA) Armies Program, "ABCA Security Force Capacity Building Handbook," *ABCA Publication 369,* ed.1, September 30, 2010, i.

[57]Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance Office, 7.

[58]Dr. Jack Kem, phone interview by author, November 23, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

[59]Ibid.

The NTM-A has the overall responsibility for training, equipping, resourcing, and purchasing for the entire ANSF (ANA, ANP, and the Afghan National Army Air Force). NTM-A is specifically charged with the recruiting, training, equipping, resourcing, and purchasing for new ANA trainees. However, once the recruits successfully complete the Basic Warrior Training (BWT) course, they are assigned and deployed to their new unit. Once the new soldiers arrive at their unit and are in-processed, the soldiers then transition under the IJC.

CSTC-A, on the other hand, is in charge of providing ministerial assistance at both the Afghanistan Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Ministry of Interior (MoI) levels. The MoD is focused on the development of the ANA and MoI is in charge of the ANP program. It should also be noted that NATO did not sign up for the Ministerial Advisory mission, leaving CSTC-A responsible for that effort. Dr. Jack Kem, Deputy Commander for NTM-A, states that on any given day, over 1,550 military, police, and civil service professionals from NTM-A and CSTC-A conduct advisory work between the two ministries. Their focus is on developing a systemic approach to Afghan policy development, means of tracking and systems workflow. The advisors are also involved in the day-to-day issues such as training, education, and the ongoing maturation of the human resources system."[60] The overall working relationship between these advisors and their counterparts at the ministry level is very good. The advisors work to assist their counterparts in developing the systems, procedures, regulations, and processes (within an Afghan context) to build the capability to eventually transition to full Afghan leadership and responsibility for security by the end of 2014. Advisors also assess the readiness for each sub-directorate of the ministries, which are reported monthly in a meeting with ISAF.[61] NTM-A and CSTC-A efforts must focus on the eventual transition to the Government of the Islamic Republic

[60]Ibid.

[61]MAJ James Pangelinan, email interview with author, February 6, 2011, Leavenworth, KS.

of Afghanistan (GIRoA) the responsibility to effectively provide for its own security as a responsible member of the international community.[62] If this does not happen, the Afghan government could be seen as weak or as a puppet regime for NATO or more specifically, the United States. The GIRoA needs to understand where the weaknesses are within their government structure and focus their efforts on putting the right people into those ministries to support the overall legitimacy of the government.

Dr. Kem also stated, "CSTC-A is in charge of the budgeting of US forces through the Afghan Security Forces Fund (ASFF), a fund established to resource the training of the entire ANSF."[63] The ASFF is administered by the US Department of Defense and as of 30 September 2010, the US had appropriated nearly $29.35B – including nearly $9.17B for fiscal year 2010. Most of these funds were directed through the ASFF to provide equipment, services, training and infrastructure related assistance to the ANSF.[64]

In order to build the required capacity within the ANA, the NTM-A will have to overcome the traditional resistance from Afghan tribes toward foreign intervention in their affairs.[65] Afghan tribes always have and always will resist any type of foreign intervention in their affairs. This makes the recruiting process overseen by NTM-A more involved than it may appear on the surface. Afghans are not necessarily a nationalistic people, something not normally

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[62]Cindy Jebb and Richard Lacquement, "NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan/Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan: Building a Sustainable, Legitimate, Effective Afghanistan Security Force: A Holistic Perspective," *Small Wars Journal*, available at http://www.smallwarjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/342-jebb.pdf (accessed November 2, 2010).

[63]Dr. Jack Kem, phone interview by author, November 23, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

[64]Anthony Fields, "Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction: Quarterly Report to the United States Congress" October 30, 2010, available at http://www.sigar.mil/oct2010Report.asp, (accessed November 24, 2010), 61.

[65]Jim Gant, "One Tribe At A Time: A Strategy for Success in Afghanistan," available at http://www.stevenpressfield.com/2009/10/one-tribe-at-a-time-4-the-full-document-at-last (accessed November 2, 2010).

understood by Westerners. The people instead identify much more readily with their region, tribe, or clan. This is because the region, tribe, or clan is the center of their existence and they are leery of people or programs that do not originate within that area.

The Recruiting Process

The first step of the recruiting process for most ANA applicants begins at the local recruiting station. Here, the applicant provides passport photos and secures a national ID card from the district. This is verified by the Governor or another designated individual. From here, the applicant sees a recruiter at the provincial headquarters (HQs) and completes a contract. There is a screening process which examines health and criminal records, applicant must have two village elders vouch for his character. All documents are taken to the ANA Commissar HQs for verification and signature. Medical screening is also completed at the Commissar's office. All documents then go to the provincial sub-governor for signature. Ultimately, the MoI or MoD reviews all documentation and notifies provincial authorities whether the applicant is accepted or not by issuing the directive to commence training.[66]

Once applicants are accepted into the ANA training program, they report to the KMTC for training. During the first week of training, recruits with leadership potential are removed and transferred to an NCO course to train as a section leader. After completing their first week, recruits undergo seven weeks of basic warrior training at KMTC, while being supervised by ANA instructors and US forces.[67] At the end of the initial training process, recruits receive advanced infantry training, specialty training, or join their newly assigned units. Kandaks (Battalions)

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[66]Congressional Report, Report on "Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan: June 2008."

[67]Institute for the Study of War, "Afghanistan National Army (ANA)," available at http://understandingwar. org/print/635 (accessed November 2, 2010).

undergo a 60-day period of individual and battalion training within their Corps before rotating to combat operations.[68]

For the NCOs, a specialized three-month course was established in 2010 at a new NCO training school that target recruits who are high school graduates. Leadership development has been particularly difficult, largely because limited educational levels restrict the pool of eligible officer and NCO candidates.[69] One of the biggest tensions to this training is the NCO Leader Development Course, which trains future NCOs within the ANA. These soldiers must be pulled from the fielded force and sent to school for this training. The tension in this is that the MoD does not want to release their best soldiers to receive this training, they would rather they remain in the field conducting operations. This results in cases where training classes are not completely filled to capacity, wasting opportunities for increasing the number of qualified NCOs.[70]

Officer training has a different focus from NCO and soldier training, similar to the US Army. NTM-A has the primary responsibility for training and mentoring the ANA while formal training is conducted at the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC), National Military Academy of Afghanistan (NMAA), or Command and General Staff College (CGSC). The NMAA, based on the West Point model, confers a university degree and a commission upon its graduates. However, those who already possess a university degree can enroll in a six-month officer cadet course at the Officer Cadet School (OCS), designed to bolster the ANA's junior officer corps. Candidates of the Officer Training Brigade (OTB) have already commissioned, have previous

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[68]Ibid.

[69]International Crisis Group, "A Force in Fragments: Reconstituting the Afghan National Army," available at http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/ 190%20A%20Force% 20in%20Fragments%20-%20Reconstituting%20the%20Afghan% 20National%20Army.ashx (accessed November 2, 2010), section 2.

[70]Dr. Jack Kem, phone interview by author, November 23, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

unit experience, and are only required to undergo an eight-week continuing education program. These candidates are usually ex-militia and mujahedeen with previous combat experience.[71]

Literacy Challenges within the ANSF

One of the biggest challenges of training the ANSF has been the issue of literacy. It has been widely reported that throughout Afghanistan itself, only twenty-eight percent of the population is literate; forty-three percent males and thirteen percent females.[72] MAJ James Pangelinan, who works at the NTM-A headquarters, said that literacy is a major challenge with ANSF development. "About eighty-six percent of new recruits entering the force are totally illiterate and innumerate. They were part of a "lost generation" who had no access to school. Most cannot write their names, read the serial number on their weapons, or read the most basic children's book." Prior to November 2009, there were some optional literacy classes offered at some training bases, but no mandatory programs or professional requirements for literacy. "NTM-A stood up the ANSF literacy program in 2010, and made literacy training mandatory at all training centers." It has been deemed a major success and a huge incentive for retention and recruitment in the ANSF.

Today, new recruits receive sixty-four hours of mandatory literacy training to get them to a very basic level of literacy, equivalent to the first grade. The literacy program's mission is to bring everyone in the ANSF up to a third grade level of literacy. There are currently over forty-seven thousand soldier and police recruits in literacy training every day. This figure is moving to

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[71]Institute for the Study of War, "Afghanistan National Army (ANA)," available at http://understandingwar. org/print/635 (accessed November 2, 2010).

[72]Anthony Cordesman, "Afghan National Security Forces: What It Will Take to Implement the ISAF Strategy," Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 12, 2010, available at http://www.afghanconflictmonitor.org/2010/11/afghan-national -security-forces-what-it-will-take-to-implement-isaf-strategy.html (accessed November 2, 2010).

100,000 by early fall with the continued expansion of the program. To date, there have been 28,000 graduates of the first grade program, a passing rate of eighty-five percent, and 9,000 graduates of the third grade program."[73] According to the recently released "NTM-A Year in Review," NTM-A is now educating 28,534 ANSF at any given time in literacy programs.[74] The effects are just now being measured. Polling suggests that literacy training is a huge recruitment and retention incentive. Literacy has become an enormous source of pride for those who graduate from the program.[75] In the end, increased Afghan literacy will cement ties with other NATO countries. Understanding English allows the ANSF to seamlessly participate in NATO exercises and ensures interoperability with international forces.[76]

When asked about the conflict between the immediate need for more soldiers in the fielded force and keeping some back at KMTC to receive basic literacy training, Dr. Kem stated, "That it came down to whether it was looked at as a long- or short-term requirement." He said, "That sixty-four hours of basic literacy training was being incorporated into the basic training curriculum, so that soon it would not require any additional training time or affect recruit transitions to the fielded force." Dr. Kem added, "That one way to determine whether or not the literacy program was worth the additional time is whether it is looked at as a short-term or a long-term requirement. If the short-term intent is just to field an ANA or ANP force, then literacy is

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[73]MAJ James Pangelinan, email interview with author, February 6, 2011, Leavenworth, Kansas.

[74]LTG William B. Caldwell, IV, "NTM-A Year in Review: November 2009 to November 2010," available at http://www ntm-a.com/documents/enduringledger/el-oneyear.pdf (accessed November 5, 2010).

[75]MAJ James Pangelinan, email interview with author, February 6, 2011, Leavenworth, KS.

[76]LTG William B. Caldwell, IV and Nathan K. Finney, "Security, Capacity, and Literacy," *Military Review*, (vol. XCI, January-February 2011, No. 1), 25.

not that important, but if we look to establish a long-term viable force, then the literacy training is an important step in achieving that goal."[77]

LTC David Pendall had similar views regarding the conflict between the immediate need for more soldiers in the fielded force and those staying back to receive basic literacy training, how it was viewed came down to whether or not the US is trying to solve a long- or short-term problem. "If we take the short-term view, then literacy does not rate as a high priority. If it is a long-term view then taking the extra time for literacy training makes sense because this will help both the ANA and ANP in terms of readiness. By learning how to read and write, soldiers and police will be able to properly maintain their weapons and vehicles, and also be able to read pay vouchers, which could help slow down some forms of corruption. The Afghans were a very literate nation prior to the Soviet invasion and since that time; the Afghans have become much more dependent on using oral means to teach their children because the ability to read and write has diminished. Providing ANA and ANP recruit with basic literacy training not only helps the recruits gain the ability to read their pay stubs and conduct basic weapon and vehicle maintenance. An important second-order effect is that these newly literate soldiers and police will go home and try to teach their children the basics they have learned, thus potentially increasing their literacy prior to or in conjunction with, any formal schooling they may be attending."[78]

CPT Erhan Bedestani also saw adult literacy as an issue with the ANSF while deployed. He stated "one of the key issues that is now being addressed, as of late 2010/early 2011, given the consistent partnership with the ANP Provincial Response Companies (PRC), is adult literacy within the police force. Literacy rates historically have been poor amongst Afghan Security

[77]Dr. Jack Kem, phone interview by author, November 23, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

[78]LTC David Pendall, interview by author, November 18, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

Forces. This was recognized early on during my first trip to Wardak in 2008, but we were unable to address the issue in an organized fashion given the fact that my detachment did not have an official relationship with the ANA Kandak located on the FOB. Now given the official partnership with the ANP PRC, detachments from 1-10 Special Forces Group, operating under ISAF SOF, have instituted literacy programs. This has in turn developed a more capable police force. Education is now an important part in supporting the military assistance mission for these detachments.[79]

Information Operations

The Afghan people need to perceive the Afghan government and the ANA as legitimate vis-a-vis any alternative. Information operations can be a significant aspect of coalition efforts to get information to the Afghan people.[80] Radio has become one of the major sources of news in Afghanistan because more than 11,000,000 Afghans over the age of sixteen cannot read or write and those that can have little access to newspapers, magazines, or the internet.[81] One of the ways that the NTM-A can continue to help itself is to get its message out to the masses via the radio. There have been programs where radios were distributed to rural villages so that the people can tune into local radio stations and receive information on various issues. Matthew Warshaw, the Managing Director of the Afghan Center for Socio-Economic Opinion Research, stated that next to friends and family, radio is the most important source of information for a majority of Afghans and that with eighty percent of the population living in rural areas, radio is their connection to the

[79]CPT Erhen Bedestani, phone interview by author, December 7, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

[80]Jebb and Lacquement.

[81]438th Air Expeditionary Wing, "20,000 Radios Distributed by Radio Azadi," October 10, 2010, available at http://waronterrornews.typepad.com/home/2010/10/radio-azadi.html (accessed January 29, 2011.)

world.[82] Getting this information helps in the public perception that the national government is helping makes things better for the average citizen and provides a basis for legitimacy. Another means for getting the word out is through the use of local public affairs officers. During the course of the last twelve months the Afghans have more than tripled their number of trained Public Affairs Officers - from fifty-one to over two hundred - while increasing their overall manning from about one hundred people around the nation to over four hundred communications professionals.[83]

Gaining public support both in terms of the national government and the Afghan National Security Forces, as well as providing stories that suggest how things are improving throughout the country, has taken time, but is getting better. LTG Caldwell pointed out that "there has been marked improvement in Afghan perception along a number of lines since they [the additional public affairs officers] joined the fight. Fifty-nine percent of Afghans have confidence that their country is moving in the right direction, compared to forty percent in 2009; fifty-five percent believe their country is winning the war; eighty-three percent are confident that the Afghan National Army can secure them. Even in places like Kandahar and Helmand, seventy-two percent of people want their children to grow up under an elected government and not under the Taliban."[84] These numbers show that the population is listening to what is being broadcast and want to believe that their national institutions are doing the right things. This perception will be reinforced by the conduct and the professionalism the army and police recruits are taught during

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[82]Ibid.

[83]LTG William B. Caldwell, IV, "Communicating Their Own Story: Progress in the Afghan National Security Force," October 4, 2010, available at http://mountainrunner.us/2010/10/caldwell.html (accessed January 29, 2011).

[84]Ibid.

their initial basic training. This also reinforces LTG Caldwell's plea to the NATO Military Committee highlighting the need for additional trainers.

A Dedicated Training Battalion

The 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment (2-22 IN), from the 1st Brigade, 10th Mountain Division located at Fort Drum, was deployed to Afghanistan from 8 January to 15 December 2010. The mission of this battalion was to provide the training to the ANA and ANP recruits in order to produce graduates ready to deploy to the fielded force. This would be the first unit in the US Army to deploy to Afghanistan in support of President Obama's decision to surge forces there, keeping in line with his address to the nation from West Point in early December 2009. The 2-22 IN was directed to provide trainers for ANA Soldiers, advisors for ANA leaders, PSDs for RSCs and CSTC-A, responsibility to inventory the national depots, and a variety of other missions.[85] Due to the fact that was only a handful of actual working days between the time 2-22 IN was notified and the first soldiers deployed into theater, the only mission essential pre-deployment training conducted was cultural awareness, driver, and Dari language training.[86]

One of the important aspects to conducting training for new army recruits is a refresher course on how to train and teach others. Due to the compressed timeline, 2-22 IN was not able to conduct that training prior to deployment, but the unit's senior NCOs were constantly training and teaching the soldiers within the battalion, so there was no concern on the part of the battalion leadership that this would cause any issues. An unidentified Company Commander stated "I think that the areas where we needed improvement were in understanding how to teach. I think as soldiers we all know how to "do", but teaching is an art that must be refined with experience.

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[85]LTC Michael Loos, "2-22 IN BN Modified AAR," Fort Drum, NY, January 2011, 2.

[86]MAJ Lawrence R. Walton, email interview with author, February 25, 2011, Leavenworth, KS.

Many of our junior NCOs and soldiers lacked this art. Determining the right person for the right position is key."[87]

The 2-22 IN soldiers did not have to form the new recruits into small-units; the recruits were already assigned to platoons when they arrived. With the little Dari language they had, the soldiers needed to work with and through interpreters as the training progressed. There were twelve soldiers assigned to the unit, but there had been no prior training for working with these interpreters.[88]

In terms of the training received by new ANA recruits, changes in the training itself and the focus of that training, have increased the quality of the trainees graduating from the KMTC and the Regional Basic Warrior Training (RBWT) sites. At the beginning of their rotation, the 2-22 IN was told, "that the goal was to produce quality, not quantity. It was very difficult to focus on quality with fourteen hundred recruits in an eight-week timeframe. With smaller class sizes and more instructors, the quality of recruit produced would be significantly better."[89] Even with the training shortfalls and being at a disadvantage as the first organic unit to take on the training of ANA recruits, 2-22 IN soldiers met their task and the results showed. Prior to November 2009, there were less than thirty percent of recruits that qualified on their weapon. Since their arrival, 2-22 IN has assisted over ninety-seven percent of recruits qualify. An unidentified Company Commander stated that "we were placed in a situation where the only direction to go was up. Basic rifle marksmanship percentages have increased drastically by taking the confusion out of the qualification process by using a simpler target. End of cycle testing scores have increased to the point that there are actual standards upheld. Of course, all soldiers still graduate but they do

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[87]Loos, 3.

[88]MAJ Lawrence R. Walton, email interview with author, February 25, 2011, Leavenworth, KS.

[89]Ibid.

identify those soldiers that need retraining prior to passing. Building training sites has made a drastic difference in Kandahar. Construction of proper training facilities has led to much better and more realistic training. The ANA cadre has also improved greatly during our time here. They now have the lead on all training and need minimal assistance from Coalition Forces."[90]

The 2-22 IN was given the mission of providing training at the soldier level, first at the KMTC and later at the RBWT sites in Darulaman, Khowst, Kandahar, Heart, and Mazar-E-Sharif.[91] For officer training, the French and British were tasked with providing mentors for the OTB. Even though not specifically tasked with officer training, they noticed that the OTB was not producing the desired quality of leaders, so the battalion began working with the French and British on ways to improve the course, while simultaneously placing significant fiscal, material, and manpower toward that effort.[92] An unidentified battalion staff officer said that "I believe we were modestly effective in this effort – although the potential for success is enormous."[93]

For the majority of their deployment, the 2-22 IN did not contribute much to literacy training; the only training that would take place would be the testing of the recruits to identify potential candidates for follow-on training.[94] Although they did not have much of a direct impact on the literacy training program, the battalion leadership laid the groundwork for the program during the final months in country. According to MAJ Lawrence Walton, the 2-22 IN executive officer, "Prior to us leaving, a new directive came down that mandated that all recruits receive sixty-four hours of literacy training during their Basic Warrior Training cycle. The most difficult

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[90]Loos, 5.

[91]Ibid., 2.

[92]Ibid., 7.

[93]Ibid.

[94]MAJ Lawrence R. Walton, email interview with author, February 25, 2011, Leavenworth, KS.

part was trying to deconflict the training schedule with the ANA cadre to fit in all sixty-four hours of training."[95]

Comparing NTM-A to Historical Training Tenets

A review of the training provided to the Afghan National Army in 2002 shows that the early focus was on building small-units and developing their associated tactics. This indicates little intention to train the large numbers of forces required to become the nucleus of the future ANA. In fact, the original mission fell under Foreign Internal Defense (FID) rather than SFA. The subtle difference was that SF were concerned only with internal threats to Afghanistan, not external actors or threats, making it a FID mission.[96] At that time, it made sense to have the Special Forces troops tasked to conduct that training, as that was what their stated mission. Joint publications emphasize the US SF are "the only combatant command with a legislatively mandated FID core task" and according to Field Manual 3-05.202, "the primary SF mission in FID is to organize, train, advise, assist, and improve the tactical and technical proficiency of HN forces."[97] Because of their unique training, they were best suited to conduct small-unit training. In 2001, US SF teams were focused strictly on training tactics and small-unit battle drills - first with their Northern Alliance partners, and then with the first Afghan general purpose soldiers they were tasked to train.

However, by 2006, it became apparent that the number of forces that needed training increased significantly and there was an increased focus on external threats to Afghanistan. This

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[95]Ibid.

[96]Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance Office, *Security Force Assistance Planners Guide* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Center, February 14, 2008), 2-3.

[97]Binetti, 38.

reframing led to a shift from FID back to an SFA mission. To make that level of training a reality, NATO nations were selected to conduct this larger-scale training. In addition to building on the small-unit and tactics training the US SOF provided, TF Phoenix began to look at specific training for both officers and NCOs on their duties and expectations. This was also an important transition, because without the assistance of NATO and the international community, US Special Forces soldiers would have quickly become consumed by the mission, both in terms of soldier requirements and in terms of their ability to resource ongoing training.

Training for officers and NCOs was the next step in developing a more professional ANA. This was an important step, because up to this point, there had not been much focused training for officers or NCOs, the training spoke more to forming and developing small-units, along with their associated tactics. By expanding the training to officers and NCOs, a culture of local leadership was begun and in order to accomplish this, officer and NCO specific training needed to be developed. TF Phoenix, under CSTC-A, was charged with the development of the original program of instruction. From 2006 to 2009, TF Phoenix trained the officer and NCO corps within the ANA, but a formalized structure was not established, so there were no formal metrics in which to determine the efficacy of the training. This resulted in less than fully trained officers and NCOs being assigned to units.

With the establishment of the NTM-A in November 2009, LTG Caldwell and his team took a comprehensive look at the entire training process in order to establish a good initial frame as to what training was taking place and how effective that training was. The NTM-A team immediately began to establish better training methods and means to provide more structure to the development of small-units, small-unit tactics, and the continuation of training for officers and NCO. Additionally, based on the potential base of recruits applying for the army and police ranks, literacy training was added. Lastly, it was determined that in order for the army and police to be able to sustain themselves during operations, technical training would need to be developed in the areas of the field artillery, communications, logistics, and military intelligence analysis.

In the year since the NTM-A was established; development of small-units and the associated tactics has evolved to higher levels of battalion and brigade training. Officers and NCOs have more formalized training and have opportunities to receive additional training in other countries. The recruit base is becoming more literate through mandatory literacy training. NTM-A has recently expanded this program and recruits now receive sixty-four hours of mandatory literacy training, enough to get them to a very basic level of literacy. Finally, technical training programs and schools are just beginning to be established. The field artillery school has recently graduated its first class and the other specialty areas are on the verge of training their first classes.

Challenges to the Way Ahead

At the Kabul Conference on 20 July 2010, Afghan President Hamid Karzai announced that by 2014, Afghan forces would assume all military and security responsibilities.[98] The top NATO civilian in Afghanistan, Mark Sedwell, said that the 2014 deadline is feasible for all but a residual allied force including special forces and trainers.[99] This came on the heels of the Obama Administration's announcement that the United States intended to begin withdrawing troops in July 2011. Building Afghanistan's domestic security forces to the point that they can effectively

[98] Anthony Fields, "Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction: Quarterly Report to the United States Congress" July 30, 2010, available at http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/Jul2010/SIGAR_July2010.pdf, (accessed November 2, 2010), 55.

[99] Anne Gearan and Matthew Lee, "Pentagon Chiefs: Afghans Can manage by 2014," *Associated Press* (8 November 2010), http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20101108/ap_on_re_as/as_us_ afghanistan/print (accessed 8 November 2010).

take over the country's security is critical to the eventual departure of US troops - a fact President Obama stressed in his 2009 strategy for the beleaguered Afghan military campaign.[100] Although the speed with which foreign forces move from frontline combat to a purely supportive role may slow down under General David Petraeus, the top commander in Afghanistan, there was full agreement on the ambitious target that the entire country should be under Afghan control by 2014.[101]

The most important area to be addressed by the NTM-A in the immediate short-term is an increase in the number of specialized trainers. These trainers have been pledged by many NATO nations, but to date, these nations have not fully supported their commitment. The ratio of instructors to students has gone from one for every seventy-nine trainees in 2009 to one for every twenty-nine trainees, suggesting that the new police officers and soldiers are getting more attention than in past.[102] A persistent lack of trainers will negatively impact the quality of police and soldiers and their ability to generate and sustain their forces. Without more specialty trainers...expansion of Afghan training bases will be hindered...specialty school development will be delayed...creation of support units will be slowed...professionalization efforts will be hampered...and the eventual transfer of security responsibility to Afghans will be delayed.[103]

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[100]Greg Bruno, "Afghanistan's National Security Forces," August 19, 2010 the Council on Foreign Relations *Backgrounder*, available at http://www.cfr.org/publication/19122/afghanistans_ national_security_forces.html (accessed November 5, 2010).

[101]Jon Boone, "Plan to Begin Afghan Security Handover This Year Dropped," Guardian UK, July 20, 2010, available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jul/20/plans-afghan-security-handover-dropped/print (accessed November 5, 2010).

[102]C. J. Chivers, "Gains in Afghan Training, but Struggles in War," posted October 12, 2010, NY Times (12 October 2010), available at http://nytimes.com/2010/10/13/world/asia/13kabul html?_r-1 (accessed on January 29, 2011).

[103]LTG William B. Caldwell, IV, "No Trainers, No Transition: Address to the NATO Military Committee" (September 27, 2010) NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan (NTM-A), available at http://ntm-a.com/caldwell/speeches/1433-no-trainers-no-transition -address-to-the-nato-military-committee?lang= (emphasis added by Caldwell) (accessed on January 12, 2011).

The need for these additional trainers is quickly becoming the one significant limiting factor that can impact whether or not military transitions can begin in 2011 and end by the target date of 2014. LTG William B. Caldwell, the NTM-A Commander spoke to NATO Military Committee on 27 September 2010 and stated that "to create this force, we must professionalize the police, army, and air forces; create viable logistics and medical systems; and improve the infrastructure and the institutions that train and educate them...above all, we MUST have the trainers to develop them. As our Secretary General said recently, - no trainers, no transition."[104] Caldwell went on to say that "if we do not resource this critical phase of the mission...and resource it soon...the Afghan National Security Force will not be self-sufficient...in time to begin the process of transition next year…initiative, flexibility, and professional experience...this is what trainers from coalition nations provide...and it is vital to the accomplishment of our mission."[105] Over the longer term, the military is depending on its NATO coalition partners to deploy as many as seven hundred and fifty additional police and army trainers.[106]

LTG Caldwell and the NTM-A know that additional trainers are a key to push the development of the ANSF over the tipping point. The continuing efforts of the NTM-A are to create professional officers and NCOs in the Army and Police are focused on quality training, developing experience, and providing an appropriate education; all dedicated to creating an ethos of service and loyalty. Caldwell finished his address with these sobering thoughts, "We MUST provide them with our best trainers...trainers that can only be found in your nations...and can provide Afghan leaders an example to follow. Anything less will definitely delay transition and

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[104]Ibid.

[105]Ibid.

[106]Greg Jaffe, "Training of Afghan Military, Police has Improved, NATO Report Says," *Washington Post Newspaper*, (May 30, 2010), available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/29/AR2010052903172.html (accessed January 26, 2011).

prevent Afghan National Security Forces from becoming a self-sustaining and enduring force that can protect its people and preserve its nation."[107]

Another area that requires some focus is the selection of the proper trainers. It has been many years since there was a national army in Afghanistan, many of the current generation do not remember one existing. Even when the country fought against the Soviet Union in the 1980s, there was no national army; only a collection of tribes that agreed to work together against a common enemy.

The military trainers in Afghanistan have a much bigger task in front of them as they try to inculcate an ethos of nationalism over the region, tribe, or village. As seen in the examples of T. E. Lawrence, Viscount Slim, and numerous advisors sent to Korea, Vietnam, and South America, overcoming these obstacles can be made easier if there are some trainers who can speak and understand the local dialects. This will help the recruits better understand the concepts or tasks presented to them. The general sense in Afghanistan is that "ANA recruits, though mostly illiterate, are not unintelligent. They may be ignorant in the sense of lacking formal education and understanding of general academic topics, but they are very street smart, ingenious, and quick learners. They are in fact, much like most new army recruits anywhere, hungry for knowledge and experience, motivated, and wanting to be a part of a team. This new generation of Afghan Soldiers has a different sense of nationalism than their predecessors. Much of this is instilled in their training, but there is a growing sense that the ANA Soldiers believe are 'Afghans' first rather than other affiliations to tribe or ethnicity."[108] Sergeant Joseph G. Harms, squad leader in

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[107]LTG William B. Caldwell, IV, "No Trainers, No Transition: Address to the NATO Military Committee" (September 27, 2010) NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan (NTM-A), available at http://ntm-a.com/caldwell/speeches/1433-no-trainers-no-transition -address-to-the-nato-military-committee?lang= (emphasis added by Caldwell) (accessed on January 12, 2011).

[108]MAJ James Pangelinan, email interview with author, February 6, 2011, Leavenworth, KS.

the Sixth marines described a competent Afghan contingent; "They are a lot better than the Iraqis; they understand our formations, they understand how to move, they know how to flank and they can recognize the bad guys a lot better than we can."[109]

Language skills should be viewed as critical and at least some of the trainers identified should be fluent speakers. Afghanistan is an ethnic patchwork, with ethnic, tribal, clan, local and family loyalties contributing to the web of relationships that exist in each area, so understanding the human terrain will help make sense of local social networks, a key to understanding local security challenges. This was echoed by LTC Pendall who stated that the Afghans, "understand how to work in built-up and rural areas better than US troops, they have a better innate sense of what the local protocol is to do things or to conduct operations. The ANA have a much better understanding of what makes sense from an Afghan perspective, something that US Soldiers do not really understand. Just because it makes sense to us does not mean it is the way an Afghan would do it."[110]

Another important task involves the documentation and writing of doctrine that supports the ANA. Current Afghan doctrine looks like an abridged version of the doctrine used by US forces, not necessarily how the Afghans fight or conduct operations. As a short-term solution in conjunction with the Afghan forces becoming more literate, successful tactics, techniques, and procedures need to be agreed upon, written down, and distributed throughout the unit, as well as with other units and the MoD. SFC Anthony Hoh, a former Afghan advisor, states that "current ANA doctrine is a vision of what we want the ANA to be in the future. We are not collecting

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[109]Anthony Cordesman, "Afghan National Security Forces: What It Will Take to Implement the ISAF Strategy," Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 12, 2010, available at http://www.afghanconflictmonitor.org/2010/11/afghan-national -security-forces-what-it-will-take-to-implement-isaf-strategy.html (accessed November 2, 2010).

[110]LTC David Pendall, interview by author, November 18, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

enough lessons learned from the field detailing and documenting how this Army truly fights, we are not asking ANA commanders in the field what is right, nor are we involving the right people in doctrine development."[111] The ABCA Security Force Capacity Building Handbook states similar guidance. In addition, trainers should beware not to fall into the trap of imposing their own culture, particularly their military culture, on host nation forces where this may not be appropriate.[112] To correct this potential oversight, CSTC-A needs to work through the MoD in order to bring together many of the key leaders within the ANA to capture the various TTPs being used in the field. Once these TTPs are agreed upon, they can be codified and then published as doctrine. This is a key step in the development of the ANA because any security force that is developed must be relevant to the society in which it will remain, if not it will be irrelevant and useless.[113]

A final challenge in producing a quality ANA force is the feedback received from the field on what is working, what needs to be improved, and what, if anything, needs to be added or dropped from the curriculum. The working relationship between NTM-A and the IJC is a critical one because one is dependent upon the other. The issue with this is that NTM-A is in charge of the institutional side of the training, while the IJC takes over once recruits have graduated in order to assign them to specific units. When asked about the relationship between IJC and NTM-A, LTG David Rodriguez, commander of the IJC, stated in a 15 November 2010 VTC with SAMS students that weekly face-to-face meetings were conducted and that conferences were held every six weeks. He went on to say some of the topics addressed in these meetings were potential

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[111]Anthony Hoh, "The Problems with Afghan Army Doctrine," *Small War Journals* (June 17, 2008), available at http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2008/06/print/the-problems-with-afghan-army-1/ (accessed November 2, 2010).

[112]American, British, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand (ABCA) Armies Program, *ABCA Security Force Capacity Building Handbook*, (ABCA Publication 369, Edition 1, September 30, 2010), 2-1.

[113]Ibid., 2-5.

Program of Instruction (POI) restructuring, re-education programs, and leader development programs.[114] Dr. Kem concurred by stating that weekly meetings were conducted with the IJC and that a variety of topics were discussed.[115] LTC Loos, the 2-22 IN Commander, received direct feedback from the field during his battlefield circulation visits.[116] The importance of NTM-A, 2-22 IN, and the IJC agreeing to any recommendations is that once a decision is made to modify the POI, it is executed so that the training reflects what is needed to support the fielded force.

Conclusion

Examples of SFA missions from the late 1700s through the 1990s provide many lessons learned. While each example must be viewed in the context of the specific time and mission conducted, four training concepts were recognized in nearly every example provided. These four historical training concepts are the development of small-units, training on small-unit tactics, development of officer training, and training for non-commissioned officers. As technology progressed, two related additional areas of importance emerged: literacy and technical training.

Since 2001, the training techniques used by US forces to train the Afghan army has changed from an initial focus of a battalion-sized unit and the small-unit tactics associated with a formation of that size. This merely focused the training of Afghan soldiers in the techniques of movement and maneuver utilized on the field of battle. As the international community and coalition forces realized the need for a larger ANA force, basic officer and NCO training was required. This training provided those leaders the opportunity to understand their duties and responsibilities and how to implement them within their units, producing leaders better prepared

[114]LTG David Rodriguez, VTC with SAMS students, November 15, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

[115]Dr. Jack Kem, phone interview by author, November 23, 2010, Leavenworth, KS.

[116]LTC Michael Loos, presentation to SAMS students, February 4, 2011.

to lead their soldiers in battle. As technology has advanced, it has become more important to have a literate force. Standard operating procedures, maintenance manuals, and equipment accountability demand that all soldiers have a basic level of literacy to help facilitate an understanding of tactics, supply and maintenance. Technical training is required due to the increased nature in the complexity of communications, artillery, and intelligence gathering equipment, particularly as technological advance increase their effectiveness. NTM-A is following each of the four historical concepts, with the addition of literacy and technical training, as the ANA trains to become a modern and fully developed armed force.

US Special Forces soldiers conducted the initial training of Afghan soldiers within three months of the September 11 attacks. This was followed by training led by the international community under the Office of Security Cooperation – Afghanistan and subsequently Task Force Phoenix. The most recent iterations of ANA training have seen US Special Forces again training the ANA, but transitioning this task to the General Purpose Forces of the US Army with oversight provided by the NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan. This was an important transition because the available number of these specially trained US SF soldiers is finite and diverting their attention to conduct training in the development of the entire ANA force may hinder the ability of US SOF, as a whole, to respond to emerging threats worldwide. While the number of US SOF troops has decreased in training the overall force, they are still the exclusive trainers of Afghan Special Forces troops. This training is in line with US SOF soldiers training small-units, one of the areas of focus for these specialized soldiers.

The evolution in training the Afghan National Army from 2001 through the 2010 timeframe has not always created the quality or quantity of soldiers required. This is critical because if the soldiers produced do not constitute a quality, or lasting, force in Afghanistan, then there is a risk that the ANA will not remain relevant inside Afghanistan. This could lead to its demise, leaving Afghanistan to potentially revert back to Taliban control. If the training fails to

produce a competent ANA force, there is a high risk of the United States failing to reach one of its strategic aims in Afghanistan.

The US and coalition forces have recognized that conventional military action alone is not sufficient to ensure the enduring success of the ANA. Success in contemporary military operations will be determined in large part by how well and how quickly the ANA can assume the responsibility for security from the coalition. The number one challenge facing the NTM-A right now is a lack of trainers. If the NTM-A is supported by the NATO troop contributing nations to provide the number of trainers they have agreed to provide, NTM-A will be able to turn out the quality and quantity of force required within the specified timeframe so NATO troop withdrawals can begin in 2014 in line with the statement of President Karzai. The goal must be that the ANA is an accountable, self-sustaining, capable and credible force able to meet the security challenges faced by Afghanistan and looked upon as legitimate by the population. If the trainers are not provided, it will take longer to produce the number of soldiers required and NATO troop withdrawal will be pushed back. Achieving this may take years, but all activities should seek to achieve this aim. Ultimately, this legitimizes Afghan authority and enables the exit of coalition forces. While this may be a short-term setback, it should not be viewed as a complete failure of the NTM-A and its training mission.

The history of SFA supports the idea that taking the time to build quality forces is worth the effort. With the right personnel, equipment and motivation, results can begin becoming visible after just a few weeks, like the Continental Forces at Valley Forge with von Steuben. Or results could take longer as it did for the advisors in Korea and Vietnam. Either way, the methods being used by the NTM-A today are helping produce an Afghan National Army that is more competent than at any time in the recent past.

Acronyms

ANA	Afghanistan National Army
ANP	Afghanistan National Police
ANSF	Afghanistan National Security Forces
ASFF	Afghan Security Forces Fund
BANG	Battalion of the Afghan National Guard
BWT	Basic Warrior Training
CPT	Captain
CENTCOM	Central Command
CGSC	Command and General Staff College
CJSOTF-A	Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan
COIN	Counterinsurgency
COP	Combat Outpost
CSTC-A	Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan
ESAF	El Salvadoran Armed Forces
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FOB	Forward Operating Base
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GPF	General Purpose Forces
HQs	Headquarters
HN	Host Nation
IN	Infantry
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
IJC	ISAF Joint Command
JCISFA	Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance

KMAG	Korean Military Assistance Group
KMTC	Kabul Military Training Center
LTC	Lieutenant Colonel
LTG	Lieutenant General
MAJ	Major
MAAG	Military Advisory Assistance Group
MAAG-V	Military Advisory Assistance Group – Vietnam
MAGTF	Marine Air Ground Task Force
MoD	Ministry of Defense
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MTT	Mobile Training Team
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NMAA	National Military Academy of Afghanistan
NTM-A	NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan
OCS	Officer Candidate School
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OMC-A	Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan
OSC-A	Office of Security Cooperation – Afghanistan
OTB	Officer Training Brigade
POI	Program of Instruction
PRC	Provincial Response Companies
PSD	Personal Security Detachment
RBWT	Regional Basic Warrior Training
ROKA	Republic of Korea Army
RSC	Regional Security Command

RVNAF	Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces
SA	Security Assistance
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SFC	Sergeant First Class
SFG	Special Forces Group
SVAF	South Vietnamese Armed Forces
TF	Task Force
TTPs	Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
US SOF	United States Special Operations Forces

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